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INTERNATIONALE ANMELDUNG VERÖFFENTLICHT NACH DEM VERTRAG ÜBER DIE INTERNATIONALE ZUSAMMENARBEIT AUF DEM GEBIET DES PATENTWESENS (PCT)

(51) Internationale Patentklassifikation 4: (11) Internationale Veröffentlichungsnummer: WO 89/06117 A61G 5/04, B62D 37/04, 61/00 Αl (43) Internationales Veröffentlichungsdatum: 13. Juli 1989 (13.07.89) A6165/04 (21) Internationales Aktenzeichen: PCT/EP89/00018 Veröffentlicht (22) Internationales Anmeldedatum: Mit internationalem Recherchenbericht. 11. Januar 1989 (11.01.89) - A616 5106 (31) Prioritätsaktenzeichen: P 38 00 476.3 (32) Prioritätsdatum: !1. Januar 1988 (11.01.88) (33) Prioritätsland: DE (71) Anmelder (für alle Bestimmungsstaaten ausser US): AN-SCHÜTZ & CO. GMBH [DE/DE]; Mecklenburgerstr. 32-36, D-2300 Kiel (DE). (72) Erfinder; und (75) Erfinder/Anmelder (nur für US): RIX, Rudolf [DE/DE]; Schönkamp 23, D-2305 Heikendorf (DE). SA 2646 3 (81) Bestimmungsstaaten: AT (europäisches Patent), BE (eu-16(1)7160) ropäisches Patent), CH (europäisches Patent), DE (europäisches Patent), FR (europäisches Patent), GB (europäisches Patent), IT (europäisches Patent), JP, LU DOCeuropäisches Patent), NL (europäisches Patent), SE (europäisches Patent), US. 372188

- (54) Title: PROCESS FOR STABILIZING A SINGLE-AXLE WHEELED VEHICLE AND VEHICLE SO STABILIZED
- (54) Bezeichnung: VERFAHREN ZUM STABILISIEREN EINES EINACHSIGEN RADFAHRZEUGS UND FAHRZEUG, DAS NACH DIESEM VERFAHREN STABILISIERT IST

(57) Abstract

A single-axle vehicle with one or two wheels arranged on the axle is characterized by high manoeuvrability. To stabilize the vehicle, a sensor produces a signal corresponding to the actual position, which controls in a closed control loop the direction and magnitude of the additional forces exerted on the vehicle in such a way that the resultant of all the forces acting on the centre of gravity of the vehicle always passes through the point of contact of the wheel or through the line joining the points of contact of the two wheels with the plane of motion. The additional forces can be applied by relative motion between the centre of gravity of the vehicle and the wheel. Stabilization of the tipping angle can also be effected by varying the propulsive forces acting on the wheels.

(57) Zusammenfassung

Ein einachsiges Fahrzeug mit einem oder mit zwei auf der Achse angeschneten Rädern zeichnet sich durch eine hohe Manövrierfähigkeit aus. Zur Stabilisierung eines solchen Fahrzeuges ist ein Sensor vorgesehen, der in der Ist-Lage entsprechendes Signal erzeugt, das in einem geschlossenen egelkreis die Richtung und Größe von auf das Fahrzeug ausgeübten Zusatzkräften so regelt, daß die Resultierende aller am Fahrzeugschwerpunkt

angreisenden Kräste immer durch den Aufstandspunkt des Rades bzw. durch die Verbindungslinie der Aufstandspunkte zweier Räder auf der Bewegungsebene geht. Die Zusatzkräste Lassen sich durch Relativverschiebung zwischen Fahrzeugschwerpunkt und Radachse ausbringen. Eine Stabilisierung der Nicklage läßt sich auch durch Verändern der auf die Räder wirkenden Antriebskräste erreichen.

<u>Verfahren zum Stabilisieren eines einachsigen</u> <u>Radfahrzeugs und Fahrzeug, das nach diesem Verfa</u> <u>stabilisert ist</u>

Die vorliegende Erfindung betrifft ein Verfahren Stabilisieren eines einachsigen Fahrzeugs nach d Oberbegriff des Anspruchs 1 sowie Fahrzeuge, die diesem Verfahren stabilisiert sind.

Fahrzeuge sind üblicherweise mit mindestens drei zwei Achsen angeordneten Rädern ausgerüstet die stabile Standfläche auf dem Boden bilden. Diese Fahrzeuge sind im normalen Betrieb stabil zu fah sie weisen jedoch eine schlechte Manövrierfähigk auf engem Raum auf und die Geländegängigkeit läß bedingt durch kleine Raddurchmesser und begrenzt Bodenfreiheit zwischen den Achsen Wünsche offen.

Einen Sonderfall bilden die sog. Zweirad-Fahrzeug bei denen zwei Achsen mit je einem Rad in Längsrichtung hintereinander angeordnet sind (Fal-Motorrad). Solche Fahrzeuge sind nur durch Mensch die mit dem Fahrzeug einen Regelkreis bilden stal fahren.

Aus der Literatur sind eine Reihe von Veröffentlgen bekannt, die sich mit der Stabilisierung des Chassis von Zwei-Achs-Fahrzeugen bei der Fahrt ülkleinere Hindernisse befassen.

So ist es aus der DE-OS 23 51 841 bekannt mit den Chassis eines Fahrzeugs mit abgefedertem Vierrad-Fahrgestell eine schnell umlaufende Masse fest zu verbinden, welche die Lage des Chassis bei der Faüber Boden-Unebenheiten stabilisiert.

moment entsteht, welches das Fahrzeug (1) um die Querachse (y) nach hinten kippt und zwar solange bis die eingestellte stationäre Betriebslage wieder erreicht ist. Da die Elemente (12, 13, 14, 7) mit den übrigen Fahrzeugkomponenten einen geschlossenen Regelkreis bilden stellt sich die Betriebslage bezüglich der Querachse (y) schnell und stabil ein.

Bei einer Kippung um die Längsachse (x), d.h. bei einem sog. Rollen des Fahrzeugs (1) wird vom Sensor (12) ein Signal erzeugt, das über den einstellbaren Regler (15) und den nachgeordneten Verstärker (16) den Stellmotor (9) betätigt. Dieser bewegt Fahrzeug (2) und Lagerbock (5) relativ zueinander in Richtung (y) solange bis eine stabile Lage erreicht ist. Die Elemente (12, 15, 16, 9) bilden mit den übrigen Fahrzeugkomponenten einen geschlossenen Regelkreis zur Stabilisierung des Fahrzeugs (1) auf den eingestellten Rollwinkel.

In den Fig. 1 und 2 sind die Elemente (13, 14, 15, 16) der Einfachheit außerhalb des Fahrzeugs (1) dargestellt. In Wirklichkeit sind diese Elemente im Fahrzeug selbst untergebracht.

Die Lenkung des Fahrzeugs (1) erfolgt durch eine kombinierte Steuerung von Radantrieb und Rollwinkel in einer hier nicht näher dargestellten Weise.

In Fig. 3 ist ein Fahrzeug (21) schematisch dargestellt, das mit zwei Rädern (22, 23), die auf einer
Achse (24) angeordnet sind auf der Bewegungsebene (3)
aufsteht. Durch diese Räder ist das Fahrzeug (21) um
seine Längsachse (x) stabilisiert. Die beiden
Hilfsräder (25) und (26) dienen zur Abstützung des
Fahrzeugs (21) in Ruhelage; sie stehen im normalen
Fahrbetrieb nicht auf der Ebene (3) auf.

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Das Fahrzeug (21) kann vorteilhaft als Fahrstuhl für Behinderte ausgebildet sein. Ein solcher Fahrstuhl ist in der Lage kleinere Hindernisse, z.B. einen Bordstein zu überwinden. Zudem ist seine Manövrierfähigkeit sehr hoch.

Die Fig. 5a bis 5c zeigen die Verhältnisse beim Anfahren eines Hindernisses, beispielsweise einer Bordschwelle (40) durch das Fahrzeug der Fig. 3 und 4.

Sobald die Räder (22, 23) die Schwelle (40) berühren, existieren, wie Fig. 5a zeigt, zwei Aufstandslinien (36) und (41). Die in diesem Moment vom Kommandogeber (33) vorgegebene Antriebskraft reicht nicht aus die Räder (22, 23) weiterhin in Drehung zu halten, so daß die Sensoren (29, 30) ein Signal an den Regler (31) geben. Der Regler (31) löst dann über die Leistungsverstärker (34, 35) und die Antriebsmotoren (27, 28), ein Drehmoment aus, welches das Fahrzeug (21) nach vorne neigt, und zwar solange bis der Schwerpunkt (5) über der Aufstandslinie (41) liegt (Fig. 5b).

In dieser Position wird zusätzlich zu dem vom Kommandogeber (33) gesteuerten Drehmoment an den Rädern (22, 23) ein Drehmoment (P.a) ausgeübt, wobei (P) das am Schwerpunkt (S) angreifende Gewicht des Fahrzeugs (21) und (a) der aus Fig. 5b ersichtlichte Abstand ist. Unter der Wirkung dieses Gesamt-Drehmoments hebt sich das Fahrzeug (21) auf die Stufe (40). Dabei wird die Neigung des Fahrzeugs nach vorne laufend vermindert, d.h. das Fahrzeug richtet sich auf, bis es in der Position der Fig. 5c wieder seine, der Fig. 5a entsprechende stationäre Lage erreicht hat.

Das Fahrzeug (21) hebt sich also über die Schwelle (40), ohne daß die Bedienungsperson spezielle Maßnahmen ergreifen muß.

Patentansprüche:

WO 89/06117

1. Verfahren zum Stabilisieren eines einachsigen Radfahrzeuges mit einem oder mit zwei auf dieser Achse angeordneten Rädern in einer vorwählbaren Betriebslage relativ zur Horizontalebene, bei dem ein der Ist-Lage entsprechendes Signal erzeugt wird, dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß dieses Signal in einem geschlossenen Regelkreis die Richtung und Größe von auf das Fahrzeug ausgeübten Zusatzkräften so regelt, daß die Resultierende aller am Fahrzeugschwerpunkt angreifenden Kräfte immer durch den Aufstandspunkt eines Rades bzw. durch die Verbindungslinie der Aufstandspunkte zweier Räder auf der Bewegungsebene geht.

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- Verfahren nach Anspruch 1, dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß die Zusatzkräfte durch Relativverschiebung zwischen Fahrzeugschwerpunkt und Radachse aufgebracht werden.
- 3. Verfahren nach Anspruch 1, dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß zur Stabilisierung der Nicklage die Zusatzkräfte durch Verändern der Antriebskräfte aufgebracht werden.
- 4. Einrädriges Fahrzeug, das nach dem Verfahren des Anspruchs 1 in einer vorwählbaren Betriebslage relativ zur Horizontalebene stabilisiert wird, dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß Motoren (7, 9) zur Erzeugung von in Längs- und Querrichtung (x, y) des Fahrzeugs (1) wirksamen Zusatzkräften, Sensoren (12) zur Erzeugung von dem Nick- und dem Rollwinkel des Fahrzeugs (1) entsprechenden Signalen und eine Schalt-Anordnung (13, 14, 15, 16) zur Umwandlung der Sensor-Signale in Stellgrößen zur Betätigung der Motoren (7, 9) einen geschlos-

richtung des Fahrzeugs verschiebbar ist, und daß die Motoren zur Verschiebung der Radaufhängung dienen.

- Einachsiges Fahrzeug nach Anspruch 7, dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß jedes der Räder (22, 23) mit einem auf der Achse sitzenden Antriebsmotor (27, 28) versehen ist, und daß die Schalt-Anordnung (31) Stellgrößen zur Steuerung des Radantriebs erzeugt.
- 10. Fahrzeug nach einem der Ansprüche 2 bis 9, dadurch gekennzeichnet, daß Hilfsräder (10, 11, 25, 26) vorgesehen sind, die nur im nicht stabilisierten Zustand des Fahrzeugs (1, 21) auf der Bewegungsebene (3) aufliegen und damit ein Umkippen des Fahrzeugs verhindern.

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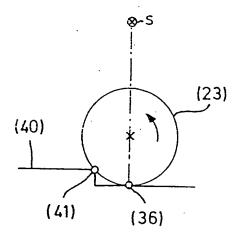


Fig. 5a

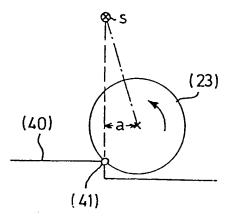


Fig.5b

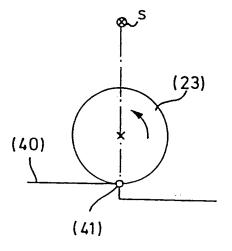


Fig.5c

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT International Application No PCT/EP 89/00018 I. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER (if several classification symbols apply, indicate all) According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both National Classification and IPC A 16 G 5/04, B 62 D 37/04, B 62 D 61/00 II. FIELDS SEARCHED Minimum Documentation Searched ? Classification System Classification Symbols Int.Cl4 A 61 G; B 62 D Documentation Searched other than Minimum Documentation to the Extent that such Documents are included in the Fields Searched * III. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT Category * Citation of Document, 11 with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages 12 Relevant to Claim No. 13 Х US, A, 3145797(C.F.TAYLOR) 25 August 1964, see column 2, 1,3,7,10 line 59- column 3, line 36; column 9, line 12column 10, line 10 B62737/04 US,A,3399742(F.S.MALICK) 03 September 1968, see column 6,line 5- column 9,line 10 63x23 86x11/06 Χ 1,3,4,7,9 B62 K1/00 DE, Al, 3103961 (BASTANI HESSARI, NAVID) 02 September 1982, 1,7 see the whole document 060f3/008 Bcofs/00 B62 D 61/00 US,A,2224411(H.P.SMITH)10 December 1940, see the whole Α 1,7,10 B60x 100 862061/08 US,A,880823(C.L.REDFIELD)03 March 1908 see the whole Α 1,7,10 document. مجهامست اس US,A,2415056(W.B.WHEELER)28 January 1947,see the Α 1,4,10 whole document 667030/03 Special categories of cited documents; 10 later document published after the international filling date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance earlier document but published on or after the international filing date document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step.

document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art. document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified) document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed document member of the same patent family IV. CERTIFICATION Date of the Actual Completion of the International Search Date of Mailing of this International Search Report 10 April 1989(10.04.89) 26 April 1989(26.04.89) International Searching Authority Signature of Authorized Officer EUROPEAN PATENT OFFICE

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| I. KL | ASSIFIKATION DES ANMELDUNGSGEGENSTANDS | PCT/EI | 89/00018 | | | | |
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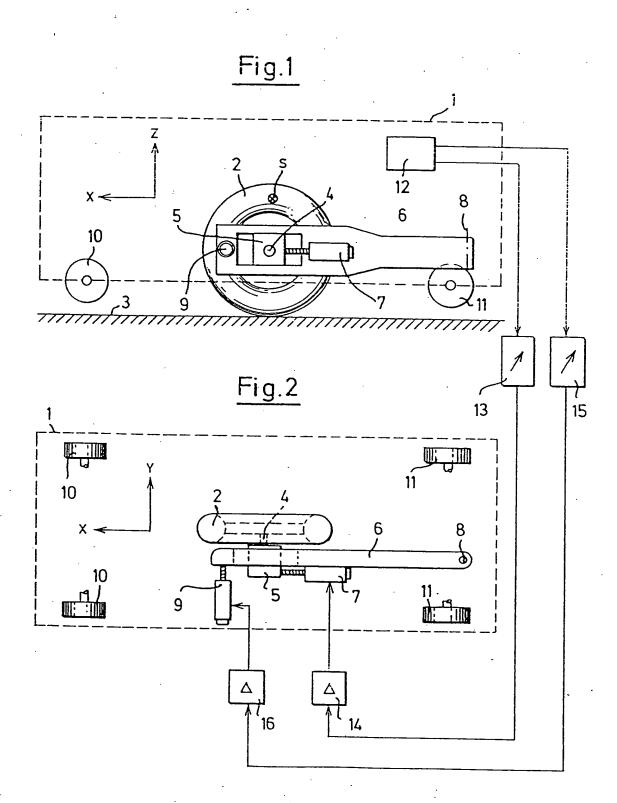
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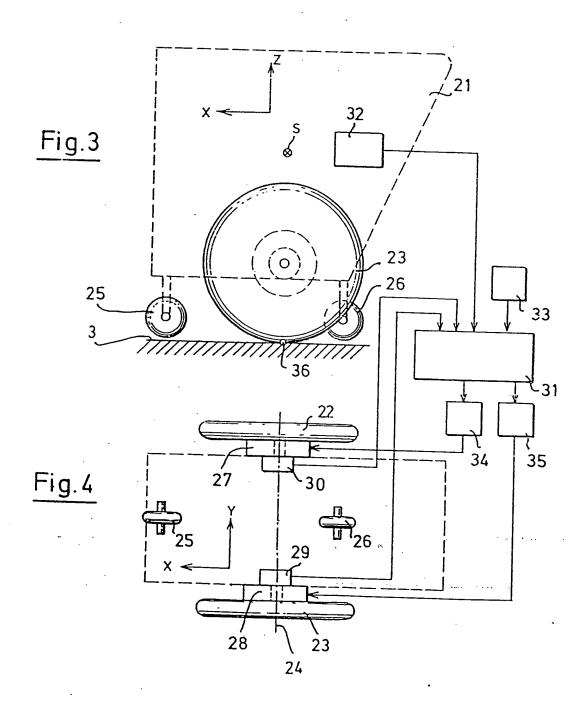
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In diesem Anhang sind die Mitglieder der Patentfamilien der im obengenannten internationalen Recherchenhericht angeführten Die Angaben über die Familienmitglieder entsprechen dem Stand der Datei des Furopäischen Patentamts am 03/03/89 (Diese Angaben dienen nur zur Unterrichtung und erfolgen ohne Genähr.

| Im Recherchenhericht angeführtes Patentdokument | Datum der Veröffentlichung | Mitglied(cr) der Patentfamilie | Datum der Veräffentlichung |
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WO 89/06117 PCT/EP89/00018

A Method for Stabilizing a Single-Axle Cycle-type Vehicle and a Vehicle which is Stabilized by this Method

The present invention relates to a method for stabilizing a single-axle vehicle according to the generic part of Claim I, as well as to vehicles which are stabilized by this method. Vehicles are usually equipped with at least three wheels, disposed on two axles, which form a stable base area on the ground. In normal operation, these vehicles are stable to drive, but they are difficult to maneuver in a tight space, and their adaptability to the terrain leaves something to be desired due to the small wheel diameter and the limited ground clearance of the axles.

So-called bicycle-type vehicles are an exception. In these vehicles two axles, each with one wheel, are disposed one after the other in the longitudinal direction (bicycle, motorcycle). Such vehicles can be driven stably only by people who form a control loop with the vehicle.

The literature contains a number of publications which relate to the stabilization of the chassis of two-axle vehicles when driving over small obstacles.

Thus, from the DE-OS 24 51 841 it is known how to join a rapidly rotating weight rigidly to the chassis of a vehicle with a sprung four-wheel undercarriage, so as to stabilize the position of the chassis when driving over irregularities in the ground.

From the EP-OS 99 971 it is known how to attach a sensor for the inclination angle and acceleration to a four-wheel vehicle, and how to use the signals generated by the sensor to move the weight about the axle being stabilized in the particular direction that is being sensed. Here, too, the position of the chassis is supposed to be stabilized when driving over irregularities in the ground.

Wheelchairs capable of climbing stairs are also known from the literature. Thus, the AU-OS 20473/83 describes such a wheelchair, which moves by means of crawlers, which are guided over several, vertically movable roll pairs. The wheelchair contains a sensor which causes the battery to shift over to the elevated side when the wheelchair is in an inclined position. This results in a stable position of the center of gravity, thus preventing the wheelchair from tipping rearward.

The US-PS 4 432 425 also describes a wheelchair capable of climbing stairs. This wheelchair has two pairs of wheels, one of which can move vertically. The axle of each pair of wheels drives a chain with elements fastened to it, by means of which it pulls the wheelchair over the stairs. The wheelchair has a sensor which measures the angle of inclination. By means of a piston, the sensor signal activates a lever, which keeps the seating surface of the wheelchair horizontal, regardless of the inclined position of the chassis. All these publications relate to the stabilization of multi-axle vehicles.

The present invention now takes its starting point from the recognition that vehicles with only one wheel or with two wheels disposed on one axle offer significant advantages as regards maneuverability, terrainhandling, and compact structure. It is the object of the invention to stabilize such vehicles relative to the horizontal in a plane, in a preselectable operating position, so that z they can be driven stably.

This object is achieved by the method characterized by Claim 1.

According to this method, every tilting motion of the vehicle is sensed, and the additional forces that need to be applied are controlled in such a way that they create a torque about the respective tilt axis, so as to cancel out the tilting motion exactly. All the sensor and compensation elements form a closed control loop, so that the operating position is stabilized, and this independently of ground irregularities or of displacements of the center of gravity.

The operating position of the vehicle can be adjusted by appropriately processing the sensor signals in the control loop.

According to the characteristic of Claim 2, the additional forces can be applied by a relative displacement between the center of gravity of the vehicle and the wheel axle, for example by displacing the wheel suspension or the axle.

According to Claim 3, an especially advantageous way of applying the additional forces for stabilizing the pitch is to change the driving forces. The vehicle is then accelerated or decelerated, and the corresponding vector, together with the gravity vector, forms a resultant which passes through the contact point of a wheel or through the connecting line between the contact points of two wheels on the plane of motion.

With this mode of applying the additional forces, the drive motors of the vehicle collaborate actively, they are part of the control loop. Thus, for example, a single-axle vehicle will raise itself over an obstacle without any special precautions being required.

Single-wheel vehicles which are stabilized by the inventive method are the subject of Claims 4 to 6. Claims 7 to 8 relate to vehicles with two wheels mounted on one axle, the wheels stabilizing the vehicle about its longitudinal axis. Such vehicles have a very advantageous design for use as wheelchairs for handicapped people.

The vehicles of Claims 4 to 9 would tilt without special precautions if the stabilization is turned off or fails. For this reason, according to Claim 10, it is necessary to provide auxiliary wheels. In the case of a single-wheel vehicle, two auxiliary wheel pairs must be provided in the longitudinal direction before and behind the vehicle wheels; with a single-axle vehicle having two wheels, each of these wheels requires only one auxiliary wheel before and behind the axle. The auxiliary wheels can be designed so that they are pulled up as long as the stabilization is active and are quickly lowered automatically when this action stops. It is also possible to shift the vehicle axle

appropriately in the vertical direction and to attach the auxiliary wheels permanently. Instead of the auxiliary wheels, supports can also be used

In the control loop for the stabilization process, the sensor signals must be converted into control variables for the motors to apply the additional forces. Since this involves complex processes, it is advantageous to use microcomputer in the control loop. Furthermore, it is advantageous to implement the control on the basis of a state model that is continuously updated by the computer (control in the state space).

The invention is explained in more detail below in terms of the embodiments of inventive vehicles shown in the drawings of Figures 1 to 5.

Figure 1 shows the principle of a single-wheel vehicle from a side view.

Figure 2 shows the embodiment of Figure 1 from a top view.

Figure 3 shows the principle of a single-axle vehicle which is stabilized about a longitudinal axis by two wheels disposed on the axle, from a side view.

Figure 4 shows the embodiment of Figure 3, from a top view

Figures 5a to 5c

show the circumstances when the vehicle of Figures 3 and 4 approaches an obstacle.

In Figure 1, (1) schematically designates the vehicle which contacts the plane of motion (3) with only one wheel (2). The spring and damping elements have been omitted for the sake of simplicity.

The axle (4) of the wheel (2) is mounted in a bearing block (5) which also comprises a drive motor seated on the axle (4). The bearing block (5) is mounted in the structural element (6) so as to be movable in the direction of the longitudinal axis (x). A hydraulic or electric servo-motor (7) actuates the longitudinal displacement. The structural element (6) is rotatably mounted about an axle (8) and can be swung by means of a servo-motor (9) in the direction of the transverse axis (y). Other means for moving the bearing block (5) can also be present.

The vehicle (1) has two paris of auxiliary wheels (10, 11), which in normal driving operation do not contact the plane (3).

The sensor (12) is disposed in the vehicle (1) and it can be designed, for example, as a gyro platform, an accelerometer, a rotational velocity gyro, a line-of-sight gyro, or a rotational accelerometer. The sensor (12) measures the pitch angle, i.e. the tilt angle about the transverse axis (y) and it delivers an appropriate signal to an electronic control (13). The latter forms a manipulated variable, whose magnitude depends on the stationary operating position set by the control (13), i.e. on the desired pitch angle and on the deviation from this setpoint as measured by the sensor (12). This

manipulated-variable signal is amplified in an amplifier (14) and activates the servo-motor (7), which moves the bearing block (5) and thus the wheel axle (4) in the longitudinal direction (x)

For example, if the center of gravity (s) of the vehicle (1) moves forward in the direction (x) a torque results which causes the vehicle (1) to tilt about the axis (y). This tilt, and the associated rotational acceleration or rotational speed, trigger a signal in the sensor (12). This signal activates the servo-motor (7) via the control (13) and the amplifier (14). The latter moves the bearing block (5) forward in the direction (x), and it does this until a torque appears which tilts the vehicle (1) rearward about the transverse axis (y), and in particular until the stationary operating position that has been set is reached once again. Since the elements (12, 13, 14, 7) make a closed control loop with the main vehicle components, this operating position relative to the transverse axis (y) is established quickly and stably.

When the vehicle tilts about its longitudinal axis (x), i.e. when a so-called rolling of the vehicle (1) occurs, the sensor (12) generates a signal which activates the servo-motor (9) via the control (15) and the series-connected amplifier (16). The servo-motor moves the vehicle (2) and the bearing block (5) relative to one another in the direction (y) until a stable position has been reached. The elements (12, 15, 16, 9), together with the other vehicle components, form a closed control loop for stabilizing the vehicle (1) at the set roll angle.

In Figures 1 and 2, the elements (13, 14, 15, 16) are shown outside the vehicle (1) for the sake of simplicity. In reality, these elements are accommodated in the vehicle itself.

The vehicle (1) is steered by the combined control of the vehicle drive and the roll angle, in a manner that is not shown here in more detail.

Figure 3 schematically shows a vehicle (21) with two wheels (22, 23), which are disposed on an axle (24) and which contact the plane of motion (3). These wheels stabilize the vehicle 21 about its longitudinal axis (x). The two auxiliary wheels (25 and 26) are used to support the vehicle (21) in its rest position; in normal operation, they do not contact the plane (3).

The wheels (22, 23) are driven by electric motors (27, 28) which can be actuated separately. The wheel (21) is steered by appropriately activating these motors. The vehicle turning point can be placed e.g. at the left or right wheel or in the middle of the vehicle.

The sensors (29) and (30) are connected to the wheels (22, 23), to measure their respective rotational speed and to conduct the appropriate signals to the control (31), which suitably is designed as a computer.

A sensor (32) is connected to the vehicle (21) to measure the rotation angle about the transverse axis (y), the rotational acceleration, and/or the rotational speed, and to conduct the corresponding signal to the control (31).

The symbol (33) designates a command transducer for speed and steering, which likewise conducts appropriate signals to the control (31)

The control (31) controls the wheel drive motors (27, 28) via the power amplifiers (34) and (35) in such a way that the resulting vector acting on the center of gravity (s)—this vector being composed of the acceleration due to gravity (g) and the acceleration or deceleration—always intersects the connecting line between the contact points (36) of the wheels (22, 23). The pitch position is thus stabilized.

The elements (27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 34, 35) form a closed control loop which achieves rapid stabilization of a vehicle (21) relative to its pitch position, i.e. the rotational position about the transverse axis (y).

The vehicle (21) advantageously can also be designed as a wheelchair for handicapped persons. Such a wheelchair is able to overcome small obstacles, e.g. a curb. In addition, it is extremely maneuverable.

Figures 5a to 5c show the circumstances when the vehicle of Figures 3 and 4 approach an obstacle, for example a curb (40).

As soon as the wheels (22, 23) contact the curb (40), two contact lines (36) and (41) exist, as shown in Figure 5a. The propulsive force which at this moment is prescribed by the command transducer (33) is insufficient to continue to keep the wheels (22, 23) rotating, and so the sensors (29, 30) deliver a signal to the control (31). The control (31) then triggers a torque via the power amplifiers (34, 35) and the drive motors (27, 28). This torque tilts the vehicle (21) forward, and specifically until the center of gravity (8) is situated above the contact-line (41) (Figure 5b).

In this position, the torque controlled by the command transducer (33) as well as a torque (P·a) is exerted on the wheels (22, 23). Here, (P) is the weight of the vehicle (21) acting on the center of gravity (s) and (a) is the distance as can be seen from Figure 5b. Under the action of this total torque, the vehicle (21) lifts onto the step (40). In this process, the vehicle is continuously prevented from tipping forward, i.e. the vehicle straightens out until, in the position of Figure 5c, it has again reached the stationary position corresponding to Figure 5a.

The vehicle (21) thus lifts itself over the step (40) without the operator having to take any special action.

From the previous discussion, it is clear that the inventive vehicle is also able to run up stairs, if the wheel diameter, the tires, and the wheel drive are appropriately designed. If the vehicle is designed as a wheelchair, the stair is approached backwards for this purpose. By a constant alternation of tipping rearward and coming erect again, the wheelchair then moves up the stairs, each step being handled as shown in Figures 5a to 5c.

It is clear that the single-wheel vehicle of Figures 1 and 2 can also be smortized as regards its pitch by appropriately activating the drive motor in the block 1 according to the action mechanisms described above.

It may also be advantageous to achieve stabilization of the pitch position by combining the measures described in connection with Figures 1, 2 and 3, 4. Larger displacements of the center of gravity here can be suitably compensated by a longitudinal shift of the wheel suspension.

Instead of lifting the wheel suspension in the directions (x) and (y) as shown in Figures 1 and 2, supplementary weights in the vehicle can also be moved in this direction in order to achieve stabilization.

To enhance driving operation still further, sensors can be used to detect obstacles and ground irregularities, so as to initiate suitable control processes for overcoming or circumventing the obstacles or for stopping the vehicle.

- A method for stabilizing a single-axle cycle-type vehicle with one or with two wheels disposed on this axle, in a preselectable operating position relative to the horizontal plane, in which a signal corresponding to the current position is generated, wherein this signal, acting in a closed control loop, controls the direction and magnitude of supplementary forces exerted on the vehicle, in such a fashion that the resultant of all forces applied to the center of gravity of the vehicle always passes through the contact point of a wheel or through the connecting line between the contact points of two wheels on the plane of motion.
- 2. The method of Claim 1, wherein the supplementary forces are applied by a relative displacement between the center of gravity of the vehicle and the wheel axis.
- 3. The method of Claim 1, wherein the supplementary forces are applied by changing the driving forces in order to stabilize the pitch position.
- Asingle-wheel vehicle, which is stabilized, according to the method of Claim 1, in a preselectable operating position relative to the horizontal plane, wherein the motors (7, 9) for creating supplementary forces acting in a longitudinal and transverse direction (x, y) of the vehicle (1), the sensors (12) for generating signals corresponding to the pitch angle and roll angle of the vehicle (1), and a switching arrangement (13, 14, 15, 16) to convert the sensor signals into manipulated variables for activating the motors (7, 9) form a closed control loop.
- 5. The single-wheel vehicle according to Claim 2, wherein the wheel suspension (5) can be moved longitudinally and transversely, and wherein the motors (7, 9) are used to move the wheel suspension.
- 6. The single-wheel vehicle of Claim 2, wherein the wheel suspension (5) can be moved in the transverse direction (y), and a motor (5), seated on the wheel axle, is used to drive the vehicle (1), and wherein the switching arrangement (13, 14, 15, 16) generates manipulated variables for transversely moving the wheel suspension and for controlling the wheel drive.
- A single-axle vehicle with two wheels disposed on this axle, which stabilize the vehicle about its longitudinal axis, and which is stabilized about its transverse axis in a preselectable operating position relative to the horizontal plane according to Claim 1, wherein the motors (27,28) for creating supplementary forces acting in the longitudinal direction of the vehicle (21), thesensors (29,30,32) for generating signals corresponding to the transverse velocity, the angular pitch velocity, and the pitch angle of the vehicle, and a switching arrangement (31) for converting the sensor signals into manipulated variables for activating the motors (27, 28) form a closed control loop.

- The single-axle vehicle of Claim 7, wherein the wheel suspension can be moved in the longitudinal direction of the vehicle and wherein the motors are used to move the wheel suspension.
- 9. The single-axle vehicle of Claim 7, wherein each wheel (22, 23) has a drive motor (27, 28) seated on the axle, and wherein the switching arrangement (31) generates manipulated variables for controlling the wheel drive.
- 10. The vehicle of one of the claims 2 to 9, wherein this vehicle has auxiliary wheels (10, 11, 25, 26), which contact the plane of motion (3) only when the vehicle (1, 21) is not in its stabilized state, and thus prevent the vehicle from tipping.